

SEA SCOUT BASE

~ Sandvlei ~

Seamanship Manual

E. Helmsman

Pages 65-71

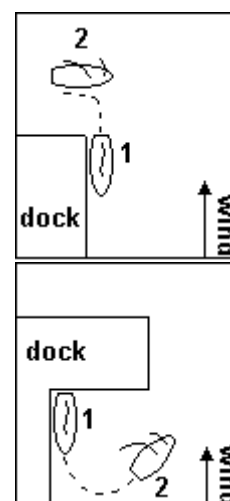
PRESAILING CHECKLIST:

1. Always check stays and shrouds. Ensure that the lanyards, if fitted, are properly secured and that stays and shrouds have been tightened sufficiently.
2. Ensure that all shackles are secure and that pins are not worn out.
3. Halyards are running freely and are not likely to chafe.
4. On Saldanha dinghies, when hoisting the mainsail, make sure that the sliding gunter (gaff) is hoisted upright **first**. Only then hoist the throat. This will prevent unnecessary strain on the mast, which occurs if it is done in reverse. It also prevents tearing of the sails.
5. Ensure that the luff of the main and jib is tight.
6. Make sure that you have enough clearance under the boom.
7. Always insist on, and use the correct commands when sailing.
8. Boat discipline must be maintained at **all times**. The helmsman is the one in charge. Ensure that you understand the need to keep the boat balanced at all times and under control.
9. When your boat is alongside a jetty for any length of time, emphasize that all sails are dropped and stowed away correctly. This prevents unnecessary wear and damage to the sails.

GETTING UNDERWAY:

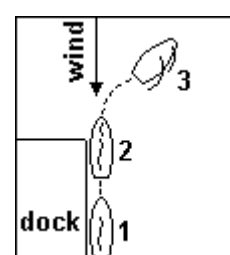
Leaving a weather jetty

As the boat is always rigged head-to-wind, it will be facing the shore. The methods you use for leaving will depend on whether there is clear water astern of the boat or not. An obstruction may take the form of part of the jetty or possibly other boats. If you do not have clear water, you will have to use the method below, right, which gives you slightly less room to manoeuvre. In both methods the boat is rigged in the same way, with first the mainsail hoisted and then the jib and the centreboard is lowered if the water is deep enough. If the wind is at a slight angle to the pontoon, rig the boat on the leeward side. It is the crew's job in both cases to push the bow of the boat off from the pontoon.



Leaving a lee jetty

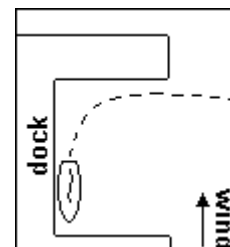
The boat is launched and turned head-to-wind (1) and led to the end of the jetty – to the leeward side if the wind is at a slight angle to the shore. The helmsman then hoists the mainsail and the jib and lowers the centreboard (2). Since there is only one course the boat can take to depart, the helmsman and crew must be sure that it is free of obstructions before setting off. The crew then pushes the bow of the boat away from the jetty and jump aboard. The sails are set and the boat is sailed away close-hauled (3).



COMING ALONGSIDE:

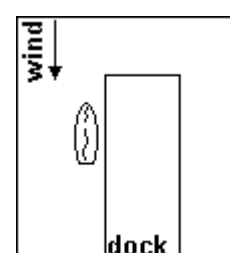
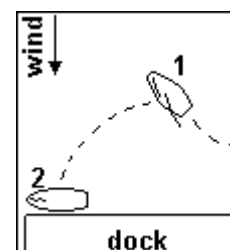
Returning to a weather jetty

You will find it much easier to come alongside the part of the jetty that lies at right angles to the weather shore, rather than the part lying parallel to it. The same method is used in both cases, but the latter requires precision timing on the part of the helmsman. If you are a novice and have no alternative, but to come alongside a jetty parallel to shore, then it would be advisable to lower the sails some distance off and paddle or row in. The other alternative is to let your sails flap before you get to the jetty. If the wind is at a slight angle to the shore, you will find it better to approach the leeward side of the jetty, so that the sails can flap clear of the jetty.



Returning to a lee jetty

As with the weather shore, your approach will be determined to a great extent by the position of the jetty. You should use one method if you are planning to approach the part of the jetty lying at right angles to the shore, and another if you are trying to come alongside the part lying parallel to the shore. Your choice may be limited by the extent of clear water around the jetty. If in doubt, lower the sails some distance off and paddle or row in. The other alternative is to let your sails flap before you get to the jetty. If the jetty juts out quite a long way into the water and you have enough clear water, you can use the method shown bottom, right. It requires careful judgement, since you have to sail the boat quite close to the shore before luffing to a stop. If you have to make your approach to the part of the jetty lying parallel to the shore, you must let your sails flap (let fly) before you get to the jetty and come in under headsail alone.



MOORING:

STEPS FOR GETTING AWAY FROM A MOORING:

1. Get ready all gear, raise mainsail, lower centreboard. Bend jib, but do not raise. Let mainsheet run, do not belay.
2. Raise jib, but do not belay sheet. Draw boat to mooring or prepare to cast off mooring warp.
3. Hold weather jib sheet on tack desired to sail on. As head pays off, cast off mooring.
4. Sheet in main and jib. Trim both. (see Figure 1).

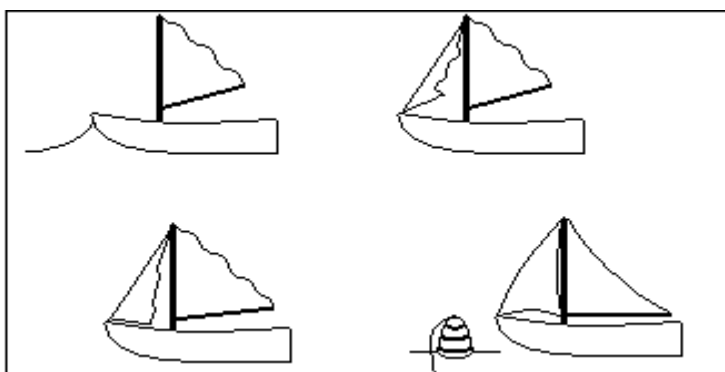


Figure 1

Steps for picking up a mooring:

1. Sail to mooring from leeward.
2. Luff and shoot into the eye of the wind, at mooring.
3. Let all sheets run. Pick up mooring and drop jib.
4. Drift back on mooring warp, douse main and snug down. (see Figure 2)

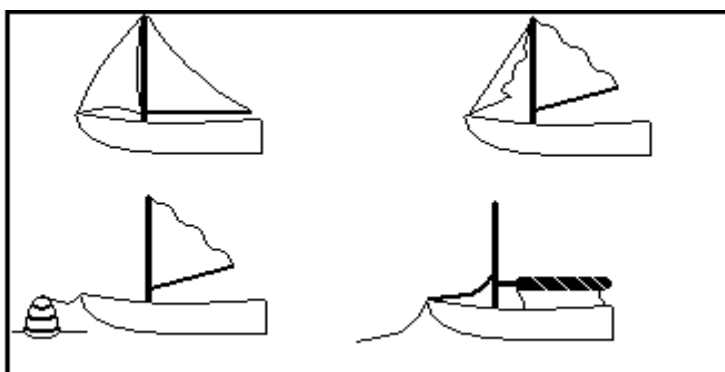
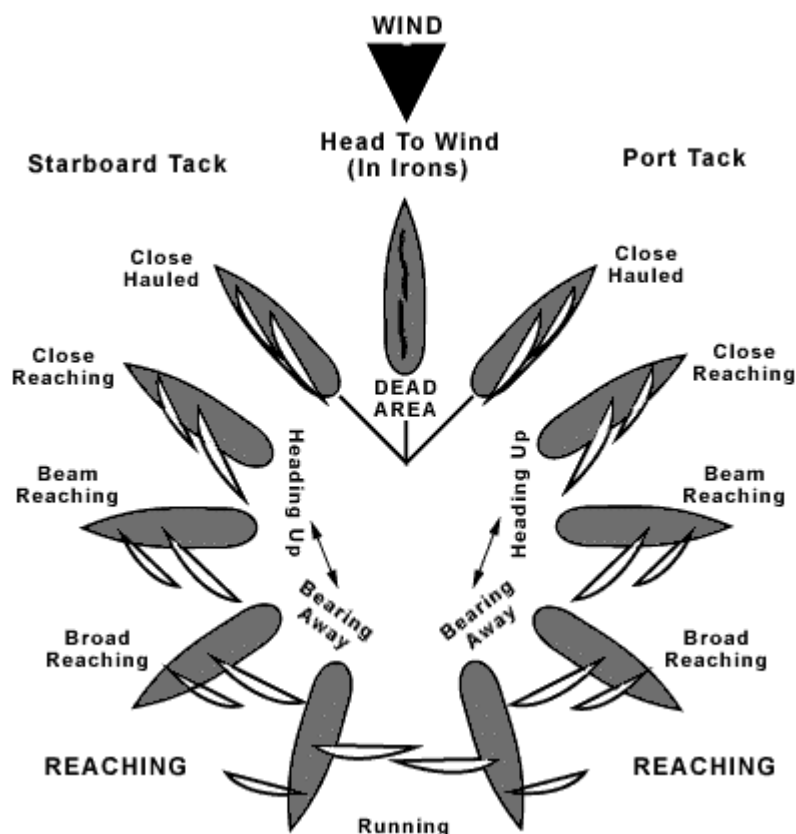


Figure 2

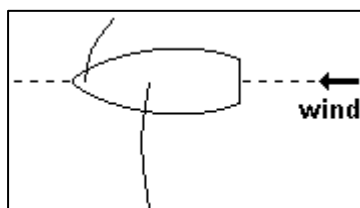
POINTS OF SAILING:

As far as the wind is concerned, there are just three ways to sail: with the wind (**running**), against the wind (**tacking or beating**) and across the wind (**reaching**). These are known as the points of sailing, and each has a special word to identify it. Sailing with the wind (the wind behind you) is called **RUNNING**. Sailing across the wind is called **REACHING**. Sailing towards the wind is called **BEATING**.

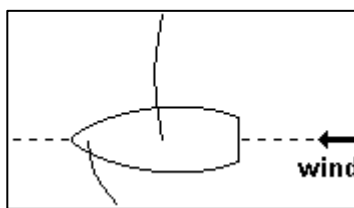


Running

Running can be tricky, even dangerous. Running before a strong wind can capsize a boat, or your craft may broach, which means it will swing broadside to the wind, lose headway and leave you at the wind's mercy, if any. Your best bet is to let the main boom swing as far forward as it will go, without causing the mainsail to luff (flap loosely). Also, keep a firm, steady hand on the tiller.



STARBOARD GYBE



PORT GYBE

Reaching

Reaching, or sailing across the wind, is probably the easiest of the three. You have the power of the wind at your side – neither dangerously pushing you from behind, or stubbornly resisting you from the front. Set your course, and then set your sails at the angle that will keep you on course. Usually more sail area is exposed to the wind when reaching, which makes it the fastest point of sailing.

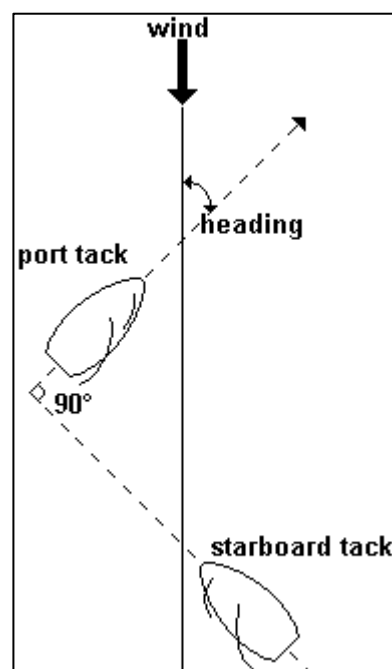
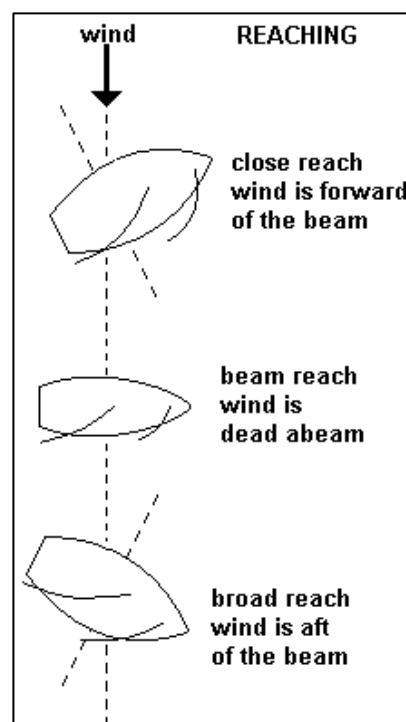
Beating

If your course is north and the wind is coming at you from the north, you have a problem. You can solve the problem by beating – a series of tacks right and left of an imaginary line between start and finish known as your course or base line. You sail on a starboard tack for a distance, as close to the wind as you can, then switch to the port tack and sail a similar distance, equally close to the wind. Keep alternating this way and each tack will bring you closer to your finishing point. Does tacking take you out of your way – force you to cover more distance than a direct route would? Of course it does. But it gets you there. Tacking works best when the mainsail and jib are set to work together properly. Neither must be trimmed too flat or eased too much. If the mainsail luffs (goes loose or soft), the helmsman may be sailing too close to the wind. Ease off.

A word to the helmsman: Whether you're running, reaching or beating, you are in charge of the tiller. Give it plenty of room to move, but don't let it take over. If you lose control of the tiller, you lose control of the boat.

Tacking

The manoeuvre when you turn the bow of the boat through the eye of the wind, is known as tacking. As you bring the bow up toward the wind, the boom moves across the boat and as the turn continues through the wind, the sails begin to fill on the opposite side of the boat. You normally tack from one close-hauled course to another, but beginners generally find it easier to tack from a reach to a reach, which allows the boat to move through a greater angle, giving both the helmsman and crew more time to complete the manoeuvre. Many people find tacking rather confusing at first and lose their sense of direction. The helmsman in particular, tends to get in a muddle with the controls and it often helps to practice the hand and foot movements first on dry land.



Tacking Commands

Helmsman: *"Ready to go about!"*

Crew: Crew gets ready by uncleating sheets.

Helmsman: *"Helms-a-lee!"* or *"Le-Ho!"*

Gybing

Gybing is the manoeuvre used, when sailing offwind, to get the stern of the boat to move through the wind, and the sails to fill on the opposite side. The sails are full throughout the gybe, with the consequence that the mainsail swings rapidly across the boat, unless the wind is light. The helmsman must know exactly where the wind is coming from, so that he can anticipate the point at which the boom will cross the boat, and therefore, co-ordinate his and his crew's actions.

Many sailors dread gybing the boat, but although it is more rapid and less controlled than tacking, there is no reason to avoid it, provided you practice regularly.

However, in strong winds and large seas, the risk of capsizing during a gybe may be unacceptable, especially when not racing. The alternative is to luff up, tack round and bear away onto the required course. Although this is marginally safer than gybing, it is still difficult and care must be taken to keep the boat upright and moving fast throughout the tack.

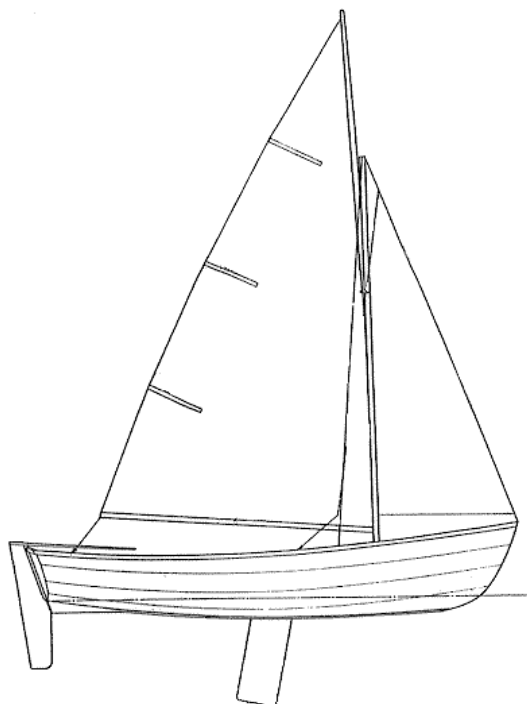
The gybing technique used in a large boat in all but light winds, involves sheeting in the mainsail rapidly. The instant the main boom is amidships, the boat becomes unstable and after the gybe, unless you let the mainsheet out again rapidly, the boat is likely to broach, heel over and quite probably capsize.

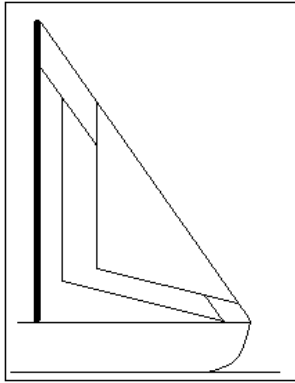
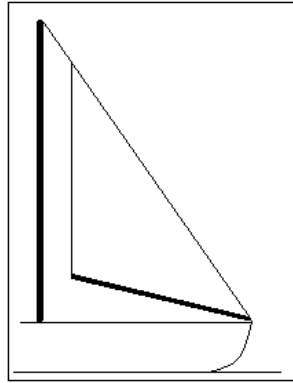
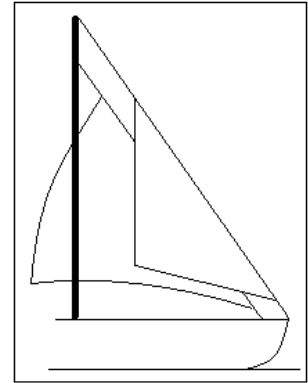
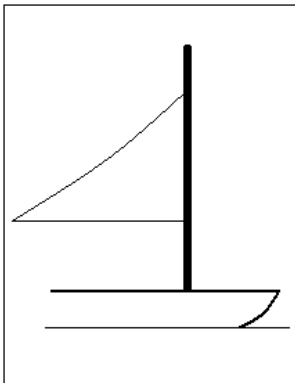
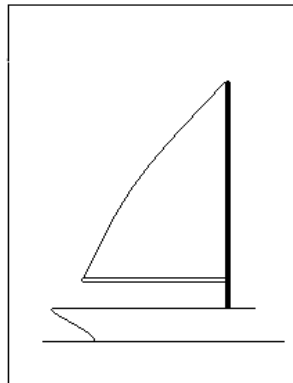
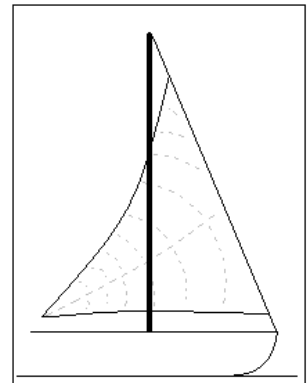
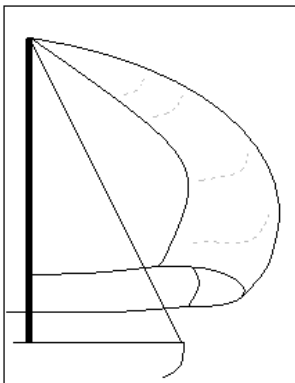
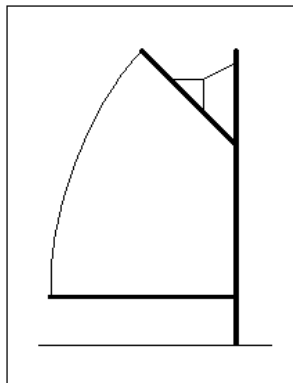
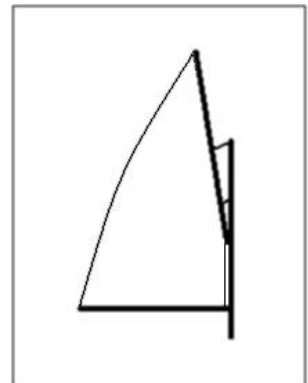
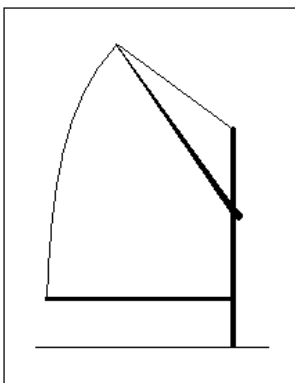
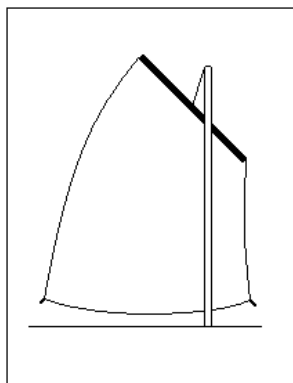
Gybing Commands

Helmsman: *"Ready to gybe!"*

Crew: Crew gets ready by uncleating sheets, then shout *"Ready!"*

Helmsman: *"Gybo!"*



TYPES OF SAILS:**Working jib over Working Staysail****Boom or Club Staysail****Yankee over Genoa Staysail****Trisail****Bermuda Main Sail****Genoa****Spinnaker****Gaff Sail****Sliding Gunter****Spritsail****Lug Sail**